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STEPHEN H. TYNG, JR.

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APPENDIX.

MOSES CERTIFIED BY JESUS.

A SERMON

BY

REV. STEPHEN H. TYNG, D.D.,

RECTOR OF ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, NEW YORK CITY.

"Search the Scriptures; for in them, ye think, ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.—ST. JOHN, v. 39.

THESE are the words of Jesus. They express the precise point of divine instruction which I wish to illustrate. That is, *the personal view and belief of Jesus, in relation to the holy writings of Israel.*

When this glorious Saviour appeared among men, born of a Jewish mother, a daughter of Israel, he was, in his human nature and connections, entirely a Jew. He personally conformed to all the separating ordinances of the covenant of Israel. Though in his divine nature, the only begotten Son of God, he was, in all his earthly relations, of the stock of Israel, "an Israelite, indeed." At the time of his appearing on the earth, in his great mission of Salvation to men, certain peculiar, and well known religious records, were in the possession of this people. They claimed for these inherited writings, a positive, distinct, and divine authority. They maintained for them a position of secluded reverence and acknowledgment. In such reverence were these writings held, in the estimation of this people, that they feared even to tread upon a fragment of paper lying in their path, lest it might be some portion of these divine records.

These books, thus received and regarded, were familiarly called, "The Scriptures;" "The word of God;" bearing an authority in the estimation of the Israelites, which had been conceded to no other writings in the possession, or the knowledge of men. With equal discrimination, they were often styled, "Moses and the prophets," as certifying the designated men, by whom, under the divine inspiration, they were originally spoken and written; and through whom the communications and commands which they contained, were conveyed from God to men.

This inherited view of these Sacred Scriptures, so comprehensive, and so discriminating, was maintained as a fundamental principle and conviction in every succeeding generation of Israel. St. Paul spoke of these ancient writings as a Jew, and precisely in the language of this people, when he said to Timothy, "from a child, thou hast known THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, through the faith which is in Christ Jesus." "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." Every one of these writings is *breathed from God*. They are the voice, the word of God. "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." This language of Paul was a statement of the distinct, undoubting faith and opinion of the Jewish people at the period of the "Manifestation of the Son of God" among them.

At *this* time, among *this* people, amidst *such* circumstances Jesus appeared. He assumed the character and office of a Teacher sent from God; as a messenger of unprecedented authority, of unlimited wisdom, of infallible and undeniable truth. In his communications, he claimed an elevation which was supreme. He presented himself as the "Son of God," "The only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," whom "the Father had sealed and sent into the world;" who could say, "I and my Father are one;" and to whom God had "given his Spirit without measure." The followers of Jesus acknowledged and accepted his claims to *unquestionable knowledge* of the subjects of which he spoke; to *unlimited authority* in his utterances of the will of God; and to *entire infallibility* in the instructions which he gave. These claims and these concessions remain, the unchanged foundation, the universal estimate, of the authority of Jesus, among all classes of those who are called by his name, and profess to be believers in his divine message and office. And upon this unaltered and unalterable basis we stand to-day.

The actual personal *right* of Jesus to this assumption and concession, I do not propose now to discuss. The *fact* remains undisputed. *With* these personal *claims* to divine authority and

truth, Jesus *appeared* among the Jewish people, and came into personal contact and use, in public and in private, with these *Scriptures*, these *Holy Writings* of Israel. That the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, as it is called, which we now have in our possession, were the *Holy Scriptures* of Israel, in the Saviour's time and use, is a fact undisputed. The question which I propose for your consideration is : What was the *personal belief* of Jesus? What was the *actual estimate* formed by Jesus? What was the *habitual teaching* of Jesus, concerning these well-known *Scriptures* of Israel, involving the *truth* of their *historical record*, and the *claims* of their *distinct authority*? And what were his *instructions* concerning the *measure of respect*, and the *spirit of confidence*, with which they were to be received by men?

There was no *hesitation* in his *personal boldness* when dealing with their errors in faith, or their *wrongs* in practice, among the people whom he addressed. There was no *reserve* in his language of *denunciation* of the *impositions* in public teaching, or the *crimes* of individual habit, which he encountered among the very highest, and the most assuming of the rulers and teachers of Israel. Upon this very subject now before us, he did not hesitate to say to them, "Ye hypocrites, ye have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. In vain do ye worship him, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." We ask, what stand did he take, what course did he pursue, when coming into actual relation and contact with these acknowledged *Scriptures* of Israel? Did he *annul* them? Or did he *establish* them? Did he *amend* and *correct* them as *defective* or *erroneous*? Or did he profess to *fulfill* and to *certify* them as *true* and *commanding*? Did he also *set aside* these *Scriptures* by his *traditions* which he delivered? Or did he require his own statements of avowed truth to be conformed to their teaching, and to the word of God in them?

I ask you *what was* the actual personal belief of Jesus concerning these well-defined, elevated, separated, sanctified writings? You will concede this to be a question of supreme importance as presented to us who profess to believe his testimony, to acknowledge his indisputable authority, and to confess him personally, and in his instructions, to be "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," between ourselves and God; knowing all things, and testifying upon all subjects, in clear and unequivocal words of truth. We cannot avoid the free acknowledgment, or withhold the absolute assertion: That which Jesus *uttered* he *knew*. That which Jesus *taught* he *believed*. In *all that* which he *asserted*, there *was*, there *must have been*, *entire Truth*, *immovable Fact*, *without falsehood*, *without reserve*, *without error*.

What that *belief*, and that *instruction*, were in fact, in regard to the *Holy Scriptures* of Israel, the books of the *Old Testament* as we have them, is the point for inquiry which I wish you to consider.

You are perfectly aware that we come here upon a *battlefield* well trodden and *clearly marked*. The *most vigorous* efforts of modern unbelief, have been directed against the truth, and the divine *authority* of these ancient Scriptures of Israel. *Multiplied objections* from the scrutiny of *historical criticism*, from the *professed discoveries*, and *decisions* of that which *assumes* the name of "Modern Science;" and from the *assumption* of what are called *infallible conclusions* in the process of human investigations, have been arranged against the whole historical structure, and the statements of facts which are contained in these divine writings. Objections combining, it is asserted, to prove them *historically false*, and *philosophically absurd*.

These derisive objections, uttered so often with a coarse and blustering ridicule, have not been confined to the haunts and the habits of the openly ungodly and profane. It is sad to be obliged to say, that they have appeared in the *open pulpit* of *professed Scriptural* instruction, on the day of the Lord, in our own land and time.

I now quote from a published sermon of one of the most distinguished and popular preachers of our day; printed under his own authority, as delivered recently in his own well-known place of public ministration. He says, "Here and there you will find a man who holds that the world was created in six days, by a direct *fiat* of the divine will. Such a man is twin-brother to the oldest mummy in the tombs of Egypt; and I think the mummy is the better of the two." "It looks as though it were going to be shown, that men did not come according to the literal statements concerning the Garden of Eden; that they did not come from the loins of one man Adam. All the facts disclosed by scientific investigation, point to the development of man, from the lowest forms of savage life, by continuous gradations running through all ages." These sentences are extracted from bold and published statements, kindred in their character and influence, avowals of *absolute unbelief* in the truth of Scriptural assertion; and of *unqualified rejection* of the *authority* of those writings of the Old Testament which Paul has so solemnly declared to have been "breathed from God."

I do not propose to enter into any argument or discussion with such assertions in themselves. I *now ask simply* in relation to the subjects involved in such assertions, what did Jesus *per-*

sonally believe? What did Jesus *habitually teach* concerning the *authority* and the *truth* of these Scriptures, as they were acknowledged and in use in his earthly days by the Church of Israel?

It is an undoubted concession and demand of justice among men, that the *indorser* of a note assumes, and must bear the *responsibility* of the one who has signed and given it.

If Jesus certified the *Truth* of *writings* which have been *proved to be false*, and which, if he were really divine, he must have *known to be false*, His *whole edifice* of personal truth *must fall* with the one which he so falsely sustained, and which, it is now affirmed, man's science and discoveries have so completely overwhelmed and overthrown. "The Scripture cannot be broken," or separated part from part. Its varied cords of authority and truth are so completely interwoven that they must meet the strain, whatever it may be, in union. The *edifice* subsequently constructed, is so compacted upon the *foundation* on which it has been made to rest, that the undermining of the one cannot be separated from the overthrow of the other.

If the Old Testament *be*, in fact, a collection of *fables*, *falsely stated as facts*, you cannot avoid the conclusion that the professed divine teacher, who, *knowing* their falsehood, still *affirmed* the *certainty* of their *truth*, must himself *sink* in the *inevitable ruin* and the just *contempt* of the fiction to which he has chosen to bind himself and his own authority with men.

This is the simple inquiry which I have proposed to you: What did Jesus himself *believe*? And *what* did he *teach* in relation to the *question* thus presented? According to his recorded personal estimate, and in the proposed range of his transmitted instructions, were these ancient Scriptures *true* or *false*, a *Revelation* from *God*, or an *Invention* by *man*?

In the exhortation of our present text, "Search the Scriptures," he certifies to this whole body of well-known writings in a single reference and statement. He acknowledges the truth of the conception of the Israelites—that their instructions *contain* and would guide to the possession of "*Eternal Life*." He claims that their united testimony is a *true history* of His own projected character, mission, and work. Without discrimination, or reserve, or exclusion, he affirms their truth and their authority.

But if their records and assertions can be proved unfounded and impossible—overthrown by facts indisputable and established, the *whole foundation* of the *personal truth* of Jesus has gone—the *whole scheme* of his *proposed salvation* for man—the *whole authority* of his professed and admired *instructions*, must be

buried, in the overthrow and ruin which has been thus accomplished. The *demonstrated falsehood* of these Scriptures in the *history* and the *statements* of facts which they contain, must be equally the destruction of their whole testimony; and in that destruction the annihilation of the *certainty* of the *hope* which rests upon their communications. But what did Jesus say? "*Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.*" That Jesus personally believed these Scriptures as statements of certain truth, that he taught and certified their truth, their priceless worth, their infinite importance as the "Word of the living God," is thus indisputable, and beyond a rational question.

But let us proceed. In *this same particular discourse*, Jesus farther presses the *practical* force of this very conclusion. "Do not think that *I will accuse* you to the Father! There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. Had ye believed Moses ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of *Me*. If ye believe not his writing, how shall ye believe My words." But they are *especially* "the writings of Moses" which are now so coarsely assailed. The man who *does* believe them is declared to be more stupid and senseless than "the oldest mummy in the tombs of Egypt." And yet it was this very man, the man "*believing Moses*," to whom the Saviour refers with approbation.

Upon what rational basis can one avow himself a believer in Jesus—still more, a minister for Jesus—who sneers at his testimony and command with a coarseness and contempt like this? The conclusion is absolute. The records of the "Old and New Testament," "the Law and the Gospel," "Moses and Jesus," must stand or fall together. Matt. v. 17. Jesus expressly affirms this indissoluble connection—this assumption of mutual responsibility, as involved in His whole purpose and history. "Think not that I am come to *destroy* the Law, or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to *fulfill*." The personal authority and mission of Jesus were intended to *establish*, not to *overthrow* the *truth* and *authority* of these ancient writings. The concrete expression, "the Law and the Prophets," included the whole compass of their contents and their claims. And he carries the unchanging certainty of these still farther: "For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, not one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law till all be fulfilled."

From Truth, nothing can ever pass. That which is once *true* remains immovably true forever. Ages of revolutions cannot affect the *abiding reality* of a fact which has been once established, as in itself, absolute and real. And can any one doubt that

Jesus himself, personally, thoroughly believed the statements of facts, which he declares to be so absolute and immovable?

But we are not left to these general conclusions by themselves. Jesus enters into very particular consideration of the distinct elements which are contained in such an inclusive affirmation. Some illustrations of this fact we will select and consider.

Mark ii. 27. He *affirms* the precise history of the *Creation*, which these Scriptures contain, and which has been so contemptuously ridiculed in the language I have quoted. He is drawn to this by a particular consideration of "the Sabbath," and in answer to the objections of the Jews. He gives the solemn, positive affirmation, "the Sabbath was made for man." This assertion of the *divine appointment* of the Sabbath, of necessity includes the truth of the history of the preceding creation, of which the Sabbath was made the express memorial and witness. The sacred record runs: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished; and on the seventh day God ended His work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it, *because* that in it God had *rested* from all His work which He had made."

This was the history of the origin and appointment of the Sabbath which these ancient "Scriptures" gave. Jesus affirms its truth. He also declares His own personal connection with it: "The *Son of Man* is the Lord of the Sabbath." Jesus, then, believed this record. He knew its truth by His own personal connection with it. He was himself the CREATOR. "By Him the worlds were made." Heb. i. 2. "All things were made by Him." John i. 3. "By Him were all things created." Col. i. 16.

Jesus thus taught this history as indisputably true. He pledged his own authority and truth upon the reality and certainty of its origin and its relative importance. How, then, can any one say that this history of the Creation is *false* without involving the actual *falsehood* or the personal *ignorance* of Jesus, who so solemnly certified and maintained it? How can any one truly profess himself a believer in Jesus, and yet deny and ridicule a divine history which Jesus has indorsed and declared to be actual and infallibly true? How can one call himself a Christian and yet revile the personal authority and truth of this Gracious Lord, in whom he professes to believe?

Again, Jesus enters into a particular consideration of the institution of marriage, and of the origin of the human race, which have been also involved in this ridicule and rejection. Matt. xix. 4.

Addressing the professed teachers of Israel, in His day, Jesus says, referring to their own acknowledged Scriptures, "Have ye

not read, that HE which *made them* at the beginning, made them male and female, and said, 'For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they *twain* shall be *one* flesh.' What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."

This is the very history of the origin of the human race which this modern infidelity so ridicules and reviles. I am not now concerned in a general discussion with open and consistent infidelity. But *I ask*, did not Jesus believe and teach the reality and truth of this particular history of the origin of the race of man, contained in the Scriptures of Israel? And how can any one ridicule and revile this *history*, and yet *assume* to call himself a believer in the *truth*, the *knowledge*, and the *wisdom* of Jesus as a divine teacher sent from God? The edifice of His revelation can never stand, where the foundations of divine authority and truth are thus rudely and violently overthrown.

I will select, as another illustration of the testimony of Jesus, the history of the *Flood*, as contained in these Scriptures of Israel. This history has been as much disputed and reviled as the history of the *creation*, and of *man*. But Jesus affirms this also, with equal minuteness and decision. In discussing His own future coming and its results, he says, Matt. xxiv. 37: "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be. As in the days which were before the Flood, they were eating and drinking, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them away; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be." Jesus thus assumes and affirms the *whole Scripture history of Noah*, as in itself, real and true; and as properly illustrating His own future advent, in the *certainty* of the fact proclaimed, and its *actual occurrence*, notwithstanding all the attending unbelief of man. Jesus certainly *believed* that history. He received it as "the Word of God, which abideth forever." He rested His own credibility and truth, upon the *declared certainty* of that which He thus acknowledged and certified. He did this in the most solemn manner, and in connection with the most solemn of His own revelations and relations to men. I ask, did not Jesus himself *believe* this history in the ancient Scriptures of Israel, and the writings which contained it?

I will select one other illustration as distinct and solemn in its application as either of these. Matt. xii. 39; Luke xi. 30. Jesus describes and pledges his own approaching *death* and subsequent *resurrection*, and he selects from the ancient Scriptures that which he calls "the sign of the prophet Jonas." He says, "as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart

of the earth." "For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall the Son of Man be to this generation."

I ask you, did not Jesus believe the *reality* and *truth* of this history of Jonas? But no fact narrated in the Scriptures of Israel perhaps has been more ridiculed and reviled by unbelievers in the inspired Word of God.

I have thus selected four separate narrations of the ancient historical and prophetic "Scriptures," from "Moses and the prophets," which were adduced by Jesus, as facts of divine history, illustrative of most important elements in his own work and mission. No statements of these ancient Scriptures have been more ridiculed and reviled by the infidelity of our day, than these four accounts of the *creation*, the *origin of man*, the *flood*, and the *history of Jonah*. Yet this divine and infallible teacher from God, particularly selects and adduces these as *historically true*. He affirms their truth. He *illustrates* and *establishes* the certainty of his own claims and promises upon their reality and truth. Did not Jesus personally believe them, and receive them as records of truth, which had been "breathed from God," "given by inspiration from God," to believing man?

What shall we then say? If all these avowed statements of *facts*, recorded and transmitted in the Scriptures of Israel, were *false*, *fictitious*, *mere parables*, *unworthy of credit*, and absolutely *irreconcilable* with facts discovered by man, and known to man, what *alternative* have we in our conclusion, but the confession that Jesus was *ignorant*, and, therefore, *incompetent* to guide the faith of others; or that Jesus was conscious of the *error*, and a partner in the *falsehood*, and the *imposition*, and, therefore, wholly unworthy of belief? How can one who assumes this whole alternative, and reviles these histories as absurd fables, too ridiculous for any but a *mummy* to believe, call himself a *believer* in the truth of that very Jesus, whose authority, and even whose possible integrity he has thus attempted to overthrow and to cover with contempt.

No, my friends, "the Scripture cannot be broken."

With a still deeper solemnity if possible, Jesus repeats his own previous testimony after his resurrection from the dead, and in the very closing of his sojourn upon the earth, Luke, xxiv. : 35. With what earnestness he chides the unbelief and hesitation of his disciples, in relation to these ancient testimonies of the Scriptures, as illustrative of *their folly*, and their *dullness of conscience* and *perception*. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe that which the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his

glory? And beginning at *Moses*, and all the *prophets*, he expounded to them, in *all* the Scriptures, the things concerning himself."

Jesus, our risen Lord, thus made one of his last acts in his closing ministry on earth, an *absolute indorsement* of the certainty and the truth of all these ancient Scriptures of Israel. "Moses and the prophets," declared by his apostles, to have been "given by inspiration of God." And there we take our *stand* with *Christ*, our glorified and exalted Redeemer, on whose lips were words of truth, in whom there was light, and no darkness at all.

Jesus personally believed these Holy Scriptures the Word of God—their divine inspiration, their certain truth, their entire reality—as the infallible Word of God, which must abide forever. That which Jesus personally believed and taught must be true; unless he was *ignorant* of the material and foundation of the question, and therefore incompetent to teach; or else, was personally *deceitful* and *untrue*, and therefore unworthy of man's belief or of human trust.

That *open, derisive, scornful infidelity* should grasp these latter alternatives, might not surprise us. But that professed faith in Jesus as a divine being, or as an authorized and qualified human teacher, should be deceived into an adoption so scandalous and so unfeeling, may well startle all confidence in the sincerity of its own position, and in the integrity of its own professed belief.

In such relations we have no right to be silent. We are compelled to be personally decided. We do not discredit, nor discourage, nor controvert what are considered or assumed as the attainments or the efforts of *advancing science*. But we must not hastily adopt the conclusions which others rashly draw from them. We must not *forget* that these communications of professed knowledge are to us, to whose eye, or ear, they are presented, in themselves but mere *appeals* to our faith in human testimony.

One man claims to have *accomplished* the *successful experiment*, or the *triumphant investigation*, and millions are called upon to believe the absolute truth of his *confident assertions* and *bold conclusions*. To such investigations I do not object. I am willing to consider. But when man calls upon me to *discard*, with instant submission to his authority, under the penalty of his ridicule, all my previous convictions and belief, founded upon still higher and long-continued testimony, I have the right to hesitate, to hold myself in *reserve*; and still more, when he demands from me to *trample* upon all my cherished

and immortal *hopes* ; to sacrifice the authority and truth of a Saviour, whose *power* I feel ; whose love I know ; in whose fidelity and infallible truth *everything* of a *moment's* worth to me is concentrated and resting, I may well do more than hesitate. My whole soul and being cry aloud within me, in every fibre of my conscience, "Let God be true, though every man should be a liar."

That these Holy Scriptures are "the Word of the Living God," is as completely demonstrated as any remote or absent fact can be to the faith of man. That Jesus, *personally believed, adopted, and indorsed* these sacred writings divinely given by Moses and the prophets, is made to us perfectly clear and beyond dispute.

What then ! With him, my glorious Lord, my gracious Redeemer, my infinite Saviour, my eternal portion, my chosen inheritance, I would cast my lot freely, fully, finally ; and abide quietly, thankfully, by the result.

I praise his name, that he has placed me from my birth in a church whose primal hereditary glory has been its faithful maintenance of this Word of the Living God. By that church I stand ; in its fellowship with Christ I would depart.

The *faith* of Jesus shall be *my faith*. The *hope* of Jesus shall be *my hope*. The *purpose* of Jesus shall be my occupation and delight. The work of Jesus shall be my chosen employment till I die. Freely, fully would I say with an ancient witness to this faith, "I would rather fall with Christ than reign with Cesar." This simplicity of reverence and confidence I would *impress* upon those who hear me. *Embrace* the word and work of Christ, as the one treasure of your mind and heart.

Live *in* Christ, in grateful faith. Live *by* Christ, through the power of his Spirit. Live *for* Christ, in unshrinking consecration.

Glorify Jesus, by the singleness of trust ; by the joy of thanksgiving ; by the calm reliance of a tranquil, triumphant faith and hope. His favor is life. His loving kindness is better than life. Nothing can be more happy on earth ; nothing more sustaining and sure in departure ; nothing more attractive or glorious in eternity, than a steadfast, unshrinking trust in the everlasting truth and fullness of this glorious and glorified Redeemer. Let neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, be allowed to separate you from that love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Learn to live under the constant teaching of the Spirit of God, peacefully, happily, thankfully, in an advancing knowledge of this infinite and inexhaustible friend ; searching daily these

holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus; and to open to you by the teaching of that Spirit who has inspired them, in an unceasing enlargement, the real treasures of the life which now is, and of that which is to come.

Watch daily, earnestly in this path, divinely opened, divinely arranged; in all your walks of intelligence or emotion, of mind or feeling, and with increasing zeal, that no man defraud you of your hope, or take your crown; that none unsettle your steadfast trust in Jesus, or persuade you to sell the birthright of your soul in his redemption, for the miserable pottage of a proud and scornful unbelief, or the low, cold, degrading quietness of a thoughtless, irrational indifference. This gracious Lord alone is the strong tower. The righteous, believing, justified in him alone, runneth into it, and is safe—safe forever.

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